



State of Connecticut

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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Sen LeBeau, Rep Perone, members of the Commerce Committee, thank for your consideration of Proposed House bill 5014, AN ACT AUTHORIZING BONDS OF THE STATE FOR THE SHUBERT THEATER IN NEW HAVEN.

I'm excited to be here because New Haven - and Connecticut - have long been so important to the arts, that it's easy to take our legacy for granted. Approaching its 100th birthday, the Shubert - Birthplace of the Nation's Greatest Hits," was just far enough from Broadway for tryouts and close enough so that companies could easily commute. Whether hosting Al Jolson, George M Cohan, Katherine Hepburn, James Earl Jones, or the musical "Oklahoma," in any history of American theater the Shubert played an essential, vibrant role. And it is still vibrant today.

The leaders of the City of New Haven determined over thirty years ago that the Shubert Theater was key to reviving the downtown. It was a gamble at the time, and they were right. Today the Shubert generates jobs not only at the theater itself but throughout downtown shops and restaurants. Together with Long Wharf Theater, Yale Repertory Theater and others, it forms a hub of performing arts that continues to showcase new talent, and has a direct economic impact on the region.

The proposal before you, if successful, would fund repairs to roof and masonry, and a mechanical upgrade to continue to host quality performances, and do so in time to celebrate its 100th birthday.

I respectfully request that you act favorably on this proposal.